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FM AMCONSUL SHANGHAI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7775  
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
AMCONSUL CHENGDU  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
NSC WASHINGTON DC  
AMCONSUL SHENYANG  
AIT TAIPEI 1647  
AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU  
AMCONSUL SHANGHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SHANGHAI 000141

STATE FOR EAP/CM, INR AND DRL  
NSC FOR LOI, KUCHTA-HELBLING

E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/27/2034

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [CH](#)

SUBJECT: (C) SHANGHAI ACTIVIST MAO HENGFENG IN BETTER HEALTH AND  
ATTEMPTING TO HELP OTHER PETITIONERS

REF: A. (A) SHANGHAI 11 AND PREVIOUS  
[1](#)B. (B) SHANGHAI 97 AND PREVIOUS

CLASSIFIED BY: MATTHEW D. MURRAY, ACTING POL/ECON CHIEF, U.S.  
CONSULATE SHANGHAI, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE.  
REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Civil activist Mao Hengfeng appeared to be in better health during a March 20 meeting with PolOff. She described her recent efforts to help petitioners in Shanghai, including her February trip to Beijing. Mao criticized Zheng Enchong, Shanghai's most well-known activist, stating that the Charter 08 signatory has been ineffective in his efforts to organize petitioners. Local activists see the 20th anniversary of Tiananmen on June 4 as an important event, Mao said, but there likely will be no public commemoration, as Shanghai police are prepared to suppress any possible demonstrations before they start. End Summary.

Feeling Better and Growing More Active  
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[1](#)2. (C) PolOff met with Mao Hengfeng and her husband, Wu Xuewei, on March 20, the first meeting with the couple since January 5 following Mao's release from prison (Ref A). Mao appeared to be in much better health than during the previous meeting, walking more steadily and dressed nicely in a suit. Mao claimed to have been "roughed up" by police on January 12, but other than routine surveillance during the March session of the National People's Congress, she said she had had little contact with authorities since her release. (Note: Mao said she believes the January 12 incident was unrelated to her meeting with PolOff one week prior. End Note.) Mao and Wu felt confident enough (and Mao was healthy enough) to travel to Beijing February 16-21 where they met with European country diplomats and attempted to get in touch with other activists. On their return to Shanghai, the couple was met by police at the train station and told to avoid visiting Tiananmen Square or other "sensitive" sites on their next trip to Beijing, but they otherwise were not harassed by authorities for making the trip. The February 21 encounter was their last face-to-face meeting with authorities.

[1](#)3. (C) Mao said the Beijing trip was her first "cautious step" towards again being more active in the Shanghai petitioner community. During the March 20 meeting, she introduced PolOff to Tan Lanying, an older woman whose house in Shanghai's Putuo District was demolished along with 300 other homes in 1996 and who has traveled to Beijing five times to petition the Central Government. Mao briefed PolOff on a new housing case where a Huangpu District resident, Sun Hongdeng, is fighting recent demolitions in that area.

[1](#)4. (C) Mao also informed PolOff about the case of Chen Sen, a young man who, according to Mao, previously was a personal

secretary for a local government official, but fell afoul of Shanghai authorities when he criticized the Beijing Olympics and was arrested. Mao said Chen has been ill since he was incarcerated in the fall of 2008, and he currently is in a local hospital with a high fever. Mao showed PolOff photos of Chen, who she believes was poisoned by authorities while in prison.

#### Zheng Enchong's Whereabouts

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¶5. (C) Mao said Zheng Enchong, Shanghai's most well-known activist and a leading Charter 08 signatory, remains under house arrest. Mao told PolOff she was unaware of reports (including a March 5, 2009 Associated Press article) that Zheng had been arrested and detained for organizing a protest. In fact, Mao criticized Zheng, saying that he has been "ineffective" in his efforts to organize petitioners in large part because Zheng is "self-motivated, interested only in fame and getting his name in the newspaper." Mao acknowledged, however, that Zheng's role in Charter 08 (Ref B) was significant and the Charter was important for improving human rights in China.

#### The 20th Anniversary of Tiananmen

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¶6. (C) Local activists see the 20th anniversary of Tiananmen on June 4 as a significant event, Mao said, but there likely will be no public commemoration, as Shanghai police are prepared to suppress any possible demonstrations before they start. She predicted that the period from mid-May to mid-June will be tightly controlled politically.

CAMP